

★★★ *In the News* ★★★

THE NATIONAL CENTER



FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH

Spring/Summer 2013

Message from David and Amy Ridenour

“We Try Harder.”

That’s been the slogan of Avis Rent A Car since 1963, and we don’t like it very much.

We believe it suggests customers should flock to Avis simply because they intend to provide superior service, not necessarily because Avis actually does this.

Some think-tanks hope you’ll judge them the same way.

But with so many demands on your limited resources and so many challenges before us, trying hard just doesn’t cut it anymore.

You deserve – you need – much more than that for your dollar and that’s what we provide.

Yes, all of us at your National Center for Public Policy Research try harder.

But we also deliver results that make a real difference in our fight for American liberty.

Among our recent achievements:

- Our black leadership network Project 21 successfully petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court to hear *Shelby Co., Alabama v. Eric H. Holder*, a case that could determine the future of voter identification laws.
- Our Free Enterprise Project’s activism prompted Disney’s CEO to admit left-wing bias at its ABC News operations and one of the nation’s most respected sources of investment tips to advise investors to avoid investing in a corporation that’s gone “green.”



David Ridenour and children Chris and Kate conduct global warming “field research” at a ski resort...they’re still skeptics.

- Our Risk Analysis Division has established itself as the leading voice for sound science, covered by CNBC, Fox, the Washington Post, Forbes, CNN, BBC, the Los Angeles Times, and some 500 others.
- Our Project 21 program is bringing more minorities into our pro-freedom movement, while others just talk about it. Since January alone, Project 21 has created more than 500 media opportunities for black conservatives and libertarians, a small sample of which are provided throughout this newsletter.

These successes are your successes. None of them would be possible without friends such as you.

To borrow from another famous car rental slogan, “We put you in the driver’s seat.”

Sincerely,

David & Amy
David and Amy Ridenour



Project 21 Exposes Left's Racist Agenda

The left's obsession with branding everything we do to advance liberty as "racist" turns out to be linked to a concept well-known in psychoanalytic theory: psychological projection.

Sigmund Freud said that projection is a defense mechanism whereby an individual subconsciously ascribes his or her negative attributes to others as a means of maintaining a positive – though false – self-image.

The only effective treatment for the condition is said to be a strong dose of reality.

Our African-American leadership network Project 21 has been doing its part, providing the left the therapy it needs by exposing the racist underpinnings of liberal initiatives.

One of the most significant of Project 21's recent efforts was filing a 29-page amicus curiae (friend of the court) brief in the key voting rights case before the U.S. Supreme Court, *Shelby County, Alabama v. Eric H. Holder*. Earlier, Project 21 had joined other groups in filing a successful brief with the Supreme Court urging it to hear the case.

At issue is Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which requires certain states, counties and municipalities to receive "pre-clearance" from the U.S. Justice Department before they're permitted to enact new election laws.

The section was designed to give federal authorities the power to prevent local governments with histories of passing laws restricting minority participation in elections from ever doing so again. One of the problems is that the law was passed during a very different era: Over 48 years ago.

Attorney General Eric Holder has abused this provision for political ends, using it improperly to stop the implementation of voter identification laws, including in areas where racial discrimination is rare-to-nonexistent.

Project 21's brief lays out a persuasive case that continued application of Section 5 is fundamentally racist.

Quoting from the brief: "Section 5 preclearance now focuses predominately on imposing racial classifications rather than eliminating them...Preclearance in the redistricting context now effectively requires such jurisdictions to segregate voters



Project 21 Co-Chairman Cherylyn Harley LeBon hosts a radio show at the 2013 Conservative Political Action Conference.

by race in order to concentrate minority votes...DOJ's own policies may well account for the difficulty faced by minority office-holders seeking state-wide office."

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THE NATIONAL CENTER



FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH

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Project 21's brief is the only one filed in the Shelby case submitted by a group of black business, academic and religious leaders arguing that Section 5 is racist. As such, it is extremely important.

Project 21 has also been taking on the left over gun control.

In February, Project 21 spokesmen Stacy Swimp and Niger Innis joined other black conservatives at a National Press Club news conference headlined "Black Leaders Speak Out on Gun Control."

Stacy described the racist origins of gun control laws in the Reconstruction-era South, saying, "there was a correlation, a direct relation, between gun control and black people control."

After the National Center posted video from the news conference of Stacy, Niger and other Project 21 members on the Internet, it was picked up by FoxNation and other websites, receiving more than 400,000 hits in a short time – testimony to the enormous media impact Project 21 members are having.

Project 21 also took on the trade union movement. When the Michigan state legislature considered right-to-work legislation covering all private and most public sector employees, which it ultimately passed, Project 21 was in Lansing educating union members about how various labor movement-sponsored initiatives are rooted in racism.

Stacy Swimp and Scott Hagerstrom from Michigan Americans for Prosperity joined forces in support of right-to-work laws, broadcasting at the scene audio of Ronald Reagan's famous right-to-work speech and talking with as many union members as possible.

Stacy has long been a proponent not only of right-to-work laws, but also an advocate for repeal of the racist Davis-Bacon Act.



Project 21 Co-Chairman Horace Cooper speaks out on the Fox News Channel against the federal government requiring "black boxes" in all new cars by 2014.

Davis-Bacon was adopted decades ago with the support of organized labor as a way to keep black Americans away from unionized highway government-construction jobs particularly prized by workers – prized because the legislation also sets an artificially high wage rate for those jobs, to the detriment of taxpayers.

The law remains racist, and is still wasteful. Stacy made sure union members gathered in Lansing knew this history.

Although many labor activists seemed open to Stacy's arguments, his interaction with one activist led to an altercation that left his cell phone in pieces. It occurred after Stacy scolded a union demonstrator for shoving a woman who was supporting the right-to-work legislation.

Though he lost his cell phone, Stacy believed the effort was well worth it.

"I have never believed in merely preaching to the choir," Stacy said. "If we can plant seeds, it can one day lead to change."

That's what Project 21 leader-spokesmen do best: plant seeds. Your continued support allows liberty to bloom.



Liberals Hate Us So Much It Hurts...Right in their Pocketbooks

Many liberals HATE your National Center for Public Policy Research because it's so effective in fighting the liberal agenda. We know this because, in their own way, they tell us so all the time.

MSNBC host Rachel Maddow has called us "sleazeballs," "cretins" and even "rats" on the air. The left-wing Nation magazine called us a "crucial gear in the right's propaganda factory."

Now liberals are telling us they hate us in an even better way...with their money.

We recently received a check for over \$4,000, all of it contributed by liberals who hate what we do.

What prompted such seemingly irrational behavior?

All the liberals had signed "commitment contracts" with StickK.com. The contracts obliged them to donate to the National Center if they failed to meet personal goals such as

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Jeff Stier, director of the Risk Analysis Division, questions a corporate plan to fine overweight employees on CNBC's "Street Signs."

losing weight, quitting smoking or increasing their exercise.

StickK.com is the brainchild of Yale University professors Dean Karlan, Barry Nalebuff and Ian Ayres and is designed to help people achieve goals by establishing incentives for them to stick to them.

Here's basically how it works: An individual sets a goal, establishes a timeframe for achieving it, and establishes the stakes for meeting the goal, which he or she pays upfront. If the goal is met, 100% of funds are returned. If the goal isn't met or only partially met, money is disbursed to a specified charity, typically one the individual doesn't like – which StickK calls an "anti-charity" – as added incentive.

Your National Center is among the 23 "anti-charities" offered by StickK.

Among current commitment contracts benefitting The National Center:

- Stephen Sherman of Westchester County, NY pledged to donate \$5 to The National Center every week his weight rises above 162 lbs. over 12 months. He's already had to pony up \$5.



Project 21's Stacy Washington guest-hosts Glenn Beck's Blaze TV show "Real News," taking issue with Vice President Joe Biden's call for more gun restrictions.

- JiaHuan Xia committed to giving us \$20 if he fails to get an "A in Econ class."
- Vitorio of Rome, Italy pledged to give us \$200 if he fails to finish an upcoming 10k race in Rome.

We just received a check for \$4,007.44. The previous year, we received \$2,877.28.

Apparently, government spending isn't the only thing over which liberals lack willpower.

StickK is a terrific way to impose penalties on people for failure. If only we could get Congress to sign up!



Media Director Judy Kent works the media at the Conservative Political Action Conference "Radio Row." She's pictured pitching Andy Parks of Washington Times Radio.



Free Enterprise Project Exposes Green Extremism

How much more would you pay for a product labeled "sustainable" by a retailer? If you're like most Americans, your answer is "Zero!" Not even a single penny.

That's what we found in a poll our Free Enterprise Project (FEP) recently commissioned.

We asked consumers how much more they would be willing to spend on retail products so that companies could comply with "sustainability" standards promoted by environmentalists.

It turns out, not a lot. Fifty-two percent of respondents indicated that they wouldn't be willing to spend a single penny more to ensure their products were sustainable. Only three percent were willing to spend an additional 10% or

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Global Warming Alarmism Losing Steam

By AMY RIDENOUR, CHAIRMAN

Global warming alarmists weren't very happy with President Obama during his re-election bid.



Amy Ridenour

Climate change didn't play very prominently in his presidential campaign and during his three debates with Mitt Romney the issue was barely mentioned.

The president was wise to avoid the issue: Few people are clamoring for increased regulation that would further jeopardize economic recovery.

A new survey shows that public concern worldwide over global warming is now at a 20-year low, with a majority of respondents indicating that they don't believe it is a serious problem.

And, reflecting diminishing concern about environmental issues, including global warming, The New York Times closed its environmental desk and its Green blog earlier this year.

All this is good because policies enacted to fight global warming hurt people.

Anti-global-warming policies are designed to raise the price of energy to deter its use. They cause inflation and kill jobs and, it turns out, would all be for naught.

Anti-global-warming activists admit the policies they fight for wouldn't have a meaningful impact on global temperatures. Too little, they say. The problem is that wealthy, developed countries such as the United States and Britain aren't the big carbon dioxide emitters of the future. China – already No. 1 – and India will be responsible for future emissions growth.

The developing world isn't going to surrender its chance at prosperity and we shouldn't expect it to. In every society, without exception, concern about environmental issues comes only after that society has enough wealth to meet basic needs and earn some luxuries.

China and India aren't going to be exceptions. Their first goal is economic growth.

And why should they sacrifice economic growth for a problem that doesn't exist?

Data collected from 3,000 land and sea locations around the globe and jointly released last month by Britain's Met Office Hadley Centre and the Climatic Research Unit of the University of East Anglia show that from early 1997 until August 2012 there was no noticeable rise in global temperatures.

Let me say that again: Earth temperatures have been steady since 1997. And the outfits saying so are the most famous pro-global-warming

theory institutes on Earth.

For those keeping track, before 1997, there was warming for about 20 years, and before that, stable or declining temperatures for about 40 years. In total, the Earth has warmed about 0.75 of a degree Celsius since 1880, which was soon after the Little Ice Age ended.

The 16-year halt to global warming we're enjoying now isn't what the global-warming computer models so beloved by Al Gore predicted. In other words, the computer models predicting global warming turned out to be wrong.

“Earth temperatures have been steady since 1997. And the outfits saying so are the most famous pro-global-warming theory institutes on Earth.”

Perhaps you already know Al Gore has parlayed his well-known interest in fighting global warming into business activities that have earned him a reported \$100 million.

For those who profit in some way from the global-warming theory, the diminished prominence of global warming has been an incredible loss. For the rest of us: An incredible boon.

A version of this article was published in 33 publications, including the Denver Post, Tulsa World, Las Vegas Sunday Sun and the Honolulu Advertiser.



What Kind of People Support Our Work? People Like...

Bert F. Winston, Jr.

Bert Winston, a fifth generation Texan, was a donor to your National Center for Public Policy Research until his death at age 76 in 2010.

A self-employed investor, restaurant owner, and rancher, Bert was active in civic and political affairs and a major contributor to charitable causes.

As a man who'd experienced the benefits of liberty in his own life, Bert supported conservative causes and organizations such as The National Center for Public Policy Research that shared his commitment to the success of freedom.

Bert's passions were by no means limited to politics. The wide range of his interests illustrates the "Renaissance Man" quality that shows up in many National Center supporters.

As the Houston Chronicle noted in Bert's obituary, "Some of his favorite things were collecting and showing classic cars, country swing music, good friends, watching sports, cold beer and Rush Limbaugh...Bert was known for being a kind and generous man, music producer, drummer, rancher, investor, philanthropist, and genuine human being."

Country Swing music, often known as Western Swing or Texas Swing, was a big part of Bert's life, and he was no passive bystander. Western Swing was especially popular in the 1930s and 1940s, when it was played by groups such as the Light Crust Doughboys, Bob Wills and The Texas Playboys, and Spade Cooley and His Orchestra. In recent decades Western Swing has experienced a revival, and Bert Winston was one of the people who made that happen.

Bert was a record producer and entrepreneur who booked performing artists at concerts and promoted their music.

One Western swing fan said of him, "People will be thanking Bert centuries from now because he had the heart and ability to archive this special musical form before the original players passed on. Musical historians, studying swing music, will have recordings that Bert made possible in their libraries."



Bert first gave to The National Center to support our efforts to curb excessive regulation and specifically to underwrite one of our most popular publications, *Shattered Dreams*, which details stories of personal tragedy resulting from excessive regulation.

Bert was especially moved by the story of Bobby Unser, three-time winner of the Indianapolis 500, who was stranded in sub-freezing weather in the Rio Grande National Forest after his snowmobile broke down during a freak snow storm. Unser spent a night in a snow cave he dug himself and walked 18 hours before finding his way to safety. But his ordeal wasn't over. Federal officials threatened him with a \$5,000 fine and a six month jail sentence because they believed he may have inadvertently crossed into a wilderness area.

Bert helped underwrite The National Center's efforts to publicize Unser's battle for justice, generating coverage on Fox News, the Orlando Sentinel, and the Orange County Register, among many others.

Though it has been three years since Bert's death, none of us at The National Center will ever forget his contributions to our fight for liberty.

By Duncan Clark

Patriots Support Liberty in Times of Peril...Through Planned Giving

If Paul Revere were making his famous ride today, what would his warning be? Maybe he would yell, “ObamaCare is coming!” or “National bankruptcy is coming!” or even “Higher taxes are coming!”

Certainly there are as many threats to freedom today as when Revere rode through the countryside in 1775. Your support for the National Center for Public Policy Research demonstrates that you are committed to liberty just as surely as were the Minutemen of Lexington and Concord.

Planned giving is an excellent way to ensure that the National Center can continue to fight for liberty both today and in the future. Your contributions are efficiently used; never wasted on bloated administrative expenses.

There are many ways you can structure your planned gift to support our effective programs while also receiving valuable tax benefits for you and your heirs. A few of the most popular include...

Bequests. A bequest simply transfers wealth by means of a will or trust. Among the assets that can be included are cash, stocks, jewelry, artwork, and real estate. You can bequeath either a set percentage of your estate or a specific dollar amount. Use language similar to this: **“I give and bequeath to The National Center for Public Policy Research of Washington, D.C. <X or Y% of my estate> to be used for its educational purposes.”** If you’re uncertain about how much you can give, another option is a residuary bequest. This is a gift of whatever is left over after providing for family members and/or paying final expenses. The wording might be something like this: **“I give and bequeath to The National Center for Public Policy Research of Washington, D.C. the remainder of my estate for its educational purposes.”**

In some cases, bequeathing real estate to The National Center rather than one’s heirs could save the heirs a measure of hardship. Recently enacted changes to the estate tax create a top rate of 40% while exempting the first \$5 million in value for individual estates and \$10 million for family estates. If the bulk of your estate is in real estate, this could be a factor to consider. If your heirs can’t sell the property – a possibility in some real estate markets – they’d be forced to come up with additional funds to pay the taxes on your estate. Family farms have been lost in this way. Bequeathing all or a portion of this real estate to The National Center for Public Policy Research could mitigate this problem.



Insurance Policies. You can support our work and earn a generous tax deduction by donating a life insurance policy you no longer need to the National Center. To qualify, you must name The National Center for Public Policy Research as your beneficiary AND you must transfer ownership of your policy. The amount of your deduction depends on the type of insurance policy.

Trusts. Assume you expect \$100,000 of your estate to be subject to the federal death tax. You could use these assets to create a Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT) and name The National Center for Public Policy Research as the beneficiary. By doing this, you can (1) receive fixed annuity payments for the rest of your life; (2) give a portion of these payments to your heirs to allow them to take out a life insurance policy on you for an equal amount; and (3) leave the remaining value of the CRT to the National Center upon your death. A related option is a Charitable Lead Trust (CLT). These differ from CRTs in that they pay The National Center a fixed amount before the assets pass to your heirs. A CLT reduces or eliminates taxes on assets you pass to your heirs.

Charitable Gift Annuities. A Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA) may be the ideal solution if you need current income. If you start a CGA at the National Center with a minimum of \$10,000, you can receive a partial tax deduction and income for life at a rate based on your age. Currently, a 72-year-old donor could receive a rate of 5.4%. In the current low interest rate environment, that’s a lot more than the prevailing rate for savings accounts or certificates of deposit, and it’s more dependable than returns from investments in the stock market.

The National Center honors donors who contribute through planned giving by qualifying them to become members of our **Legacy Society**, an elite group of supporters who receive special recognition. You can learn more about the benefits of the Legacy Society, and also about the various options for planned giving, by e-mailing David Ridenour at dridenour@nationalcenter.org or by calling him at 202-543-4110, ext. 16. You can also fill out the form below and mail it to The National Center for Public Policy Research, 501 Capitol Court, NE, Suite 200, Washington, DC, 20002.

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Project 21 spokesman Derryck Green criticizes ObamaCare mandates that violate religious freedom on Glenn Beck's Blaze TV.

more, according to our poll of 1,000 Americans conducted by The Polling Company, Inc.

“Sustainability” is a buzzword the green movement uses to create public support for restrictions on our use of natural resources, such as coal, natural gas, timber, copper, and various other raw materials.

What it's really about is restricting our choice, limiting our freedom.

Unable to sufficiently limit our choices by federal government mandates, the environmental movement is now getting some corporations to do their work for them.

Enter the Retail Industry Leader's Association (RILA), the trade association of such major retailers as Walmart, Target, Kohl's, Best Buy, and Home Depot.

RILA is seeking to impose mandatory sustainability standards on suppliers of retail goods. These standards

would likely increase costs due to enormous reporting requirements, make it more difficult for smaller manufacturers to stay in business and reduce consumer choices.

The standards wouldn't just undermine the free market generally, but ultimately hurt the very retailers pushing these extra-governmental regulations by reducing their sales.

The Free Enterprise Project is pointing these facts out to the CEOs of corporations belonging to RILA during their annual shareholder meetings. Our poll has been particularly helpful by putting real numbers to the risks to their bottom lines.

Our questioning has caught a number of CEOs off-guard.

When our FEP Director, Justin Danhof, asked Costco CEO Craig Jelinek if he would reject RILA initiatives that could harm Costco's bottom line, Jelinek didn't seem to know about Costco's RILA membership. Costco co-founder Jeff Brotman was so flummoxed by Danhof's straightforward questions that he blurted to Jelinek: “Why didn't he just ask you when you stopped beating your wife?”

And when Danhof asked Walgreens CEO Gregory Wasson how much more he thought middle-income consumers should be forced to pay for goods just so he could claim to be an environmentalist, Wasson became completely incoherent, barely able to form a complete sentence, demonstrating to all the shareholders gathered that he didn't have a clue what he was talking about.

Our efforts weren't lost on the media.



*Enterprise and Environment Institute Director Teresa Platt (bottom right) hosts a luncheon featuring the Pacific Legal Foundation's James Burling (standing). Burling spoke on *Koontz v. St. Johns River Water Management District*, a property rights case his legal team had argued before the U.S. Supreme Court.*

The Portland Oregonian ran an editorial echoing our concerns while the respected Congressional Quarterly wrote an article about them. An analyst with the Motley Fool, the multi-media financial services company, praised Danhof's questioning of Walgreens' CEO and urged investors to refrain from buying Walgreens shares until its CEO provides a good answer to Danhof's questions.



Project 21 Co-Chairman Cherylyn Harley LeBon gave interviews outside the U.S. Supreme Court as the court heard arguments in Shelby County, AL v. Holder. Project 21 filed a brief in the case.

CEOs don't like to be caught off-guard and they don't like negative publicity, so you can be sure the Costco and Walgreens executives responsible for the company's membership in RILA have had some explaining to do.

How effective have these efforts been so far? So effective that RILA officials are now seeking a meeting with us.

Our effort to stop RILA from undermining our free market system is just one of many.

We're on track to attend at least 30 shareholder meetings this year, 50% more than last year and the most ever.

None of these efforts would be possible without your generous support.



Project 21 Co-Chairman Horace Cooper lays out a persuasive case for overturning part of the Voting Rights Act in an interview on MSNBC.



Risk Analysis Division Director Jeff Stier explains why "nanny state" initiatives fail to improve public health at the 2013 Conservative Political Action Conference. (Photo Credit: Amber Schwartz/IWF.org)

Growing for Liberty...

With your National Center in the thick of many hard-fought battles, we're proud to announce that the following new employees are joining our ranks:



David Hogberg, Ph.D.,

comes on board as senior fellow for health care policy. He is focusing on educating the public about the negative consequences of ObamaCare on the nation's health care system. David has worked for the National Center previously (2006-2007), for Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), and recently spent more than four years as Washington correspondent for Investor's Business Daily, while also contributing to National Review Online, the Washington Examiner, and other publications. He has a B.A. from California State University, Sacramento, and a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Iowa.



Scott Reagan

performs a vital role as outreach manager in facilitating contacts between the National Center and its contributors, either on the phone or through periodic mailings. He brings varied experience to the task, both as a former senior claims associate for Nationwide Insurance and, more recently, as a campaign aide to several conservative candidates, including congressional candidate Martha Zoller and presidential candidate Newt Gingrich. He received his B.A. from Emory University in 2004 and a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from Florida State University in 2010.



Book Review:

Who's Counting? by John Fund and Hans von Spakovsky

Many Americans no longer trust our electoral process. A recent poll found that half of all Republicans, almost a third of independents, and one-sixth of all Democrats believe the electoral process was abused in 2012 to influence the outcome.

Election fraud not only threatens to directly affect the outcome of elections, but indirectly affects them by driving REAL voters away from the polls – voters who have come to believe their vote doesn't matter.

That's why we launched our Voter Identification Task Force one year ago.

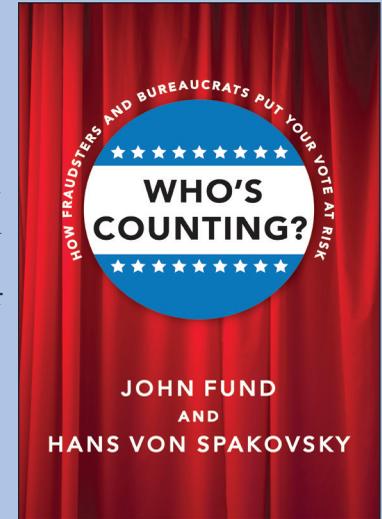
Who's Counting: How Fraudsters and Bureaucrats Put Your Vote at Risk by John Fund and Hans von Spakovsky has been an absolutely indispensable resource for our work.

Chapter seven, on corruption in the Justice Department, is worth more than the purchase price by itself, but there's plenty in every chapter to keep the reader saying "wow."

There's much you can learn by reading *Who's Counting*, including about the 2008 Senate race in Minnesota that seated Al Franken, without whom ObamaCare would never have passed the Senate:

- The "highest levels" of concern about voter fraud come from three groups: Africans-Americans, conservatives, and people earning less than \$20,000 a year.
- Mexicans take voter integrity far more seriously than do we. Mexican citizens "must present a photo, write a signature, and give a thumbprint. To guard against tampering, the voter card includes a picture with a hologram covering it, a magnetic strip, and a serial number. To cast a ballot, voters must present the card and be certified by a thumbprint scanner."
- Voter fraud in Illinois in the 1960 presidential election was not limited to supporters of Democratic candidate John F. Kennedy. There was election fraud in downstate Republican counties, too, but not sufficient enough to counterbalance Chicago.

- Minnesota Majority, a conservative watchdog group, found "compelling evidence that at least 1,099 ineligible felons voted illegally" when challenger and now-Senator Al Franken (D-MN) ran against incumbent Senator Norman Coleman (R-MN) in 2008. "That's more than three times the victory margin Franken eventually achieved through litigation."



- The 2008 Senate race in Minnesota was open to voters who were dead (but still voted), mentally-incapacitated voters (who still voted), non-citizens (who still voted), voters with non-existent addresses (who still voted) and nearly 2,000 people under 18 (who still voted).
- Minnesota's election board creatively applied the rules when counting the ballots: "It has been reported that on some ballots where voters had completely filled in the oval for Coleman and then put an 'x' through the oval, the board determined that there was no vote for Coleman. On other ballots where the exact same type of markings were made for Franken, the board determined that they were valid..."
- In Pennsylvania, impersonation fraud has "gone on since the Fifties," according to MNBC's liberal host Chris Matthews. Notes *Who's Counting*, "[Matthews] explained the scheme: Someone calls to enquire whether you voted or are going to vote, and 'then all of a sudden somebody does come and vote for you.'"

Who's Counting: How Fraudsters and Bureaucrats Put Your Vote at Risk is indispensable for understanding the dangers of voter fraud and the need for commonsense reforms such as voter identification laws. It comes with our highest recommendation.

By Amy Ridenour

No More Compromise: It's What Caused Our Fiscal Mess

By DAVID A. RIDENOUR, PRESIDENT

"If all your friends jumped off a cliff, would you jump off, too?"

For generations, parents have asked this question whenever their kids tried to justify risky activities by arguing, "everyone is doing it."



David A. Ridenour

I'm unable to find a single case of a parent asking his or her child, "If all your enemies jumped off a cliff, would you too?"

That's because even a child knows this would just be – well – stupid.

But to hear the media blather over impasses between Republicans in Congress and President Obama, you wouldn't think so.

The media wants the GOP-controlled House of Representatives to compromise more with Obama and do something incredibly dangerous.

Note to media: You can't meet half way off a fiscal cliff. There's no such thing as air brakes.

President Obama's budget plan had called for raising our taxes by \$1.6 trillion. Eventually, Republicans "compromised," allowing tax hikes of some \$600 billion and spending hikes of \$47 billion.

Whether \$600 billion or \$1.6 trillion, higher taxes only make fiscal matters worse.

That's because taxes have consequences. They not only take money out of the productive economy, but incentivize tax avoidance strategies that aren't necessarily what's best for growth.

If you doubt that higher tax rates alter behavior, consider what Costco did prior to the fiscal cliff deal.

It gave shareholders a special \$7 per share dividend to permit them to pay lower, pre-fiscal cliff tax rates. To finance the dividend, the company borrowed \$3.5 billion.

Costco CEO Jim Sinegal, who publicly called for the tax hikes, reportedly saved \$4 million as a result.

Still doubt that tax hikes cause people to change behavior?

Since 1950, the top marginal tax rate has ranged from 28 percent to 91 percent, yet revenue has remained fairly consistent throughout – between 18 percent and 20 percent of GDP.

In exchange for his tax hikes, Obama promised to consider spending cuts proposed by Republicans...some day. No promise of cuts, just a promise to think about them.

Unfortunately, even liberals' actual promises to cut spending are worthless. Back in 1982, Ronald Reagan signed the Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act, which included \$1 in tax increases for every \$3 in spending cuts. The tax increase happened, but the spending cuts never did because Democrats went back on their word.

History tells us that budgets are only balanced through spending restraint.

Much credit has been given to Bill Clinton for balancing the federal budget four times during his two terms as president. Some even say it was his 1993 tax hike that made this possible.

But the real reason was that fiscal hawks took control of Congress in 1995 and Clinton compromised. In his last budget before conservatives took control of Congress, Clinton projected annual deficits in the \$200 billion range through 2000.

Bill Clinton had to propose five budgets in 1995 before there was one acceptable to Congress. Congress balanced the budget, not Clinton.

"Note to media: You can't meet halfway off a fiscal cliff. There's no such thing as air brakes."

Clinton's signature achievement in controlling entitlement spending – welfare reform – wasn't his doing, either. He vetoed welfare reform passed by Congress twice before signing a third bill in 1996, right before the National Democratic Convention, at which he touted the achievement before millions of voters.

To those who complain the Republican House isn't compromising enough with President Obama, I have another parental saying that's apt. "Stop your whining – unless you really want to have something to whine about."

A version of this article appeared in 57 newspapers, including Newsday, the Charlotte Observer, Las Vegas Sunday Sun, and the Kansas City Star in late December.

THE NATIONAL CENTER



FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH

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Los Angeles Times

“...Robert Iger faced tough questioning about alleged liberal bias at Disney-owned ABC News and ESPN... Iger conceded...‘making mistakes.’”

– *Daniel Miller on Justin Danhof’s questioning of Disney CEO Robert Iger*

THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

“The one dark cloud hanging over the oil and gas boom in the United States is the possibility the...[EPA] will seize regulatory control over fracking...”

– *Bonner R. Cohen, NCPPR Senior Fellow*

theguardian

“Cherylyn Harley LeBon...[co-chairman] of Project 21... supports the scrapping of Section 5 [of the Voting Rights Act] because she believes America has changed so much since the law was signed.”

– *Paul Harris in The Guardian (UK)*



“The Obama administration’s...approach has been to replace dispassionate risk assessment with agenda-driven campaigns that favor sound bites over sound science.”

– *Jeff Stier, National Center Senior Fellow*



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“I...suggest that investors refrain from buying shares of Walgreens until...[he] can provide a solid answer...”

– *Motley Fool’s Gene Kropowski pressing Walgreens’ CEO Greg Wasson to answer Free Enterprise Project Director Justin Danhof’s question on whether low prices or sustainability are the higher priority*